



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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Governor Warner Appoints Dolores "Dee" Esser as Special Advisor for Workforce Development

RICHMOND—On November 1, 2005, Secretary of Commerce and Trade Michael Schewel announced that Governor Warner has appointed Dee Esser, Commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), as the Governor's Special Advisor for Workforce Development. Ms. Esser will continue to serve as VEC Commissioner.

Ms. Esser was appointed by Governor Warner as the Commissioner of the VEC on March 25, 2002. She has 29 years of state government service, the majority of it with the VEC. In her prior experience with the VEC, Ms. Esser has held executive management positions with responsibility for all facets of the VEC, including the Workforce Investment Act, Job Service, Unemployment Insurance, Workforce and Labor Market Information, and the local VEC offices around the state. Ms. Esser also serves on various national and state workforce committees.

The Governor's Special Advisor for Workforce Development oversees the coordination of the state's vast array of workforce development services. "The Governor is committed to building a world-class workforce that is required for the 21st century and as his Special Advisor, I am fully committed to his vision," stated Ms. Esser. "The Special Advisor also works with the Virginia Workforce Council (VWC), which is a business-led board that acts as principal advisor to the Governor regarding the workforce development system.

The Governor's appointment has received widespread support from all spectrums of the workforce development community. The VWC Chair Marge Connelly, executive vice president of Capital One, said, "this is an incredibly important role and I am pleased that Dee has been given the opportunity to fill this job. I look forward to partnering with her to continue the work of the VWC and our mutual effort to create a world-class workforce development system in the Commonwealth."

(more)

Hugh Keogh, a VWC member and president and CEO of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce said, “Dee Esser has a deep and widespread understanding of employers’ workforce development needs in Virginia. As Special Advisor, she will provide stability and continuity on this vital topic as we transition to a new Administration over the next few weeks. The Virginia Chamber looks forward to working with her as we all seek to improve the caliber of the workforce in the Commonwealth.”

Daniel LeBlanc, a VWC member, and president of the Virginia AFL-CIO said, “the Governor’s appointment of Dee Esser as Special Advisor for Workforce Development is the right choice. As the head of the VEC, Dee knows first hand that having a strong and well-trained workforce is vital to the future of Virginia’s economy.”

Ms. Esser said, “I will continue to support the collaborative workforce system building efforts of the VWC, with particular emphasis on the state workforce system performance measures because we must measure what we value. Additionally, I will work with the Virginia Community College System in promoting the development of ‘Bridges to Careers’ for low-skilled adults. This effort addresses the serious skill shortage that many employers have indicated must be addressed if Virginia is to remain competitive in the 21st century.”

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